

Tom Horne
Superintendent

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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ARIZONA SCHOOLS CHIEF TOM HORNE TO AWARD 6 STUDENTS AT BARCELONA MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR EXCELLENT CHARACTER

PHOENIX (Tuesday, March 9, 2004) -- Arizona Schools Chief Tom Horne on Wednesday, March 10, 2004, will recognize six students from Barcelona Middle School for their demonstration of excellent character. These six students will be receiving "Kids of Character Awards" for participating in the Character Counts program that recognizes the six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

"I promote the teaching of character education. We have to produce well balanced graduates with high academic skills and high character," stated Tom Horne. "It is important for children to learn how to be responsible and respectful citizens and in turn be role models for other students and adults."

The Arizona Character Education Initiative through the Department of Education and the Arizona Character Education Foundation provide voluntary character development training and materials at no charge to educators, parents and others. The Initiative began in 1999 and in 2003 Superintendent Horne promised to promote the teaching of Character Education. Since 1999, over 250,000 children and adults have received character training and materials.

Carter Davidson, Barcelona Principal, has been active in the Initiative since 2000, and notes a 35% decrease in disciplinary referrals and improvement in student self-discipline, school climate, more respectful behavior and a stronger commitment to school.

HB 2206, currently in the legislature, would provide funding through the sales of a character education license plate to continue providing character education at no charge.

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